

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim Listing:

1. (Currently Amended) In a gaming system comprising a memory, a service station and at least a first gaming location enabling play of a game by a player, apparatus for enabling communication with the service station and the first gaming location comprising:

an interactive first communication unit operable from the first gaming location including a first display visible from the first gaming location and displaying a message unrelated to play of the game without interrupting the game comprising a first menu of services available for selection by the player, a second menu responsive to selection of one of the services available by the player, the second menu displaying a plurality of second menu items available for selection by the player, displaying a plurality of first menu items and a second third menu responsive to selection of at least one of the first second menu items by the player, the second third menu displaying a plurality of second third selection items available for selection ordering by the player from the service station depending on a preference of the player stored in the memory before the second third menu is displayed at the first gaming location, the first communication unit responding to a selection of a selected one of the third selection items by the player to enable an order of the selected third selection item from the service station;

an interactive second communication unit operable from the service station, including a second display visible from the service station arranged to display the order and an identification of the gaming location requesting the order, the second communication unit generating a message recommending an alternative to the player for display on the first communication unit if the order is unavailable; and

a network arranged to transmit data so that messages are displayed on the first display and the second display.

2. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first display comprises touch screen display.

3. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the second display comprises a touch screen display.

4. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first gaming location comprises a gaming machine and wherein the first display is coupled to the gaming machine.

5. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 and further comprising a keypad operable from the gaming location wherein the second display displays a message comprising data entered by the keypad.

6. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first communication unit displays an image on the first display suitable for entry of at least one of numeric data and alphabetic data by touching the first display.

7. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the second communication unit displays an image on the second display suitable for entry of at least one of numeric data and alphabetic data by touching the second display.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the system comprises a central authority and a card reader, the card reader being operable from the first gaming location and arranged to read a code from a card entered by the player at the first gaming location, wherein the preference is stored in the central authority, wherein the preference is accessed in response to the code, wherein the preference

comprises a preference authorizing the player to be located ~~by another player~~, and wherein the second display is arranged to display an identification of the location of the player in response to the code.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the identification of the location comprises a map.

12. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first menu displays a plurality of types of personal service available according to the preferences of the player.

13. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the second menu displays a plurality of reservation services available.

14. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first display displays a message enabling the player to enter a name of a person and a message and wherein the network transmits the message to the named person.

15. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first display displays the first and second menus sent to the first display.

16. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first gaming location is arranged to accommodate a first player and wherein the first communication unit enables entry by the first player of at least one of a name of a second player and a second player code and enables entry of a first message, the apparatus further comprising a central authority, a second gaming location arranged to accommodate a second player, an interactive third communication unit operable from the second gaming location, including a third display visible from the second gaming location, the third communication unit enabling entry by the second player of at least one of a name

of the first player and a first player code and enabling entry of a second message, wherein the central authority is arranged to identify the first gaming location in response to at least one of the name of the first player and the first player code and is arranged to identify the second gaming location in response to at least one of the second player name and second player code, and wherein the network is arranged to transmit data resulting in display of the first message on the third display and is arranged to transmit data resulting in display of the second message on the first display.

17. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 16 wherein the code comprises a player ID number.

18. (Currently Amended) In a gaming system comprising a first gaming location and a second gaming location, apparatus for enabling communication between the first and second gaming locations comprising:

an interactive first communication unit operable from the first gaming location and arranged to accommodate a first player, the first communication unit including a first display visible from the first gaming location, enabling entry of at least one of a ~~name of a second player~~ a second player gaming location and a second player code and enabling entry of a first message apart from a previously stored list of names of possible recipients;

an interactive second communication unit operable from the second gaming location and arranged to accommodate a second player, the second communication unit including a second display visible from the second gaming location, enabling entry of at least one of a ~~name of the first player~~ first player gaming location and a first player code and enabling entry of a second message apart from a previously stored list of names of possible recipients; and

a network arranged to transmit data resulting in display of a first menu including the first message and the name of the first player on the second display, the first menu enabling selection of a reply menu allowing the second player to enter a reply message to the first player, the network also being arranged to transmit data resulting in display of a second menu including the second message and the name of the second player on the first display, the second menu enabling selection of a reply menu allowing the first player to enter a reply message to the second player.

19. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 18 and further comprising a central authority arranged to identify the first gaming location in response to at least one of the ~~name of the~~ first player gaming location and the first player code and arranged to identify the second gaming location in response to at least one of the ~~name of the~~ second player gaming location and the second player code.

20. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 18 and further comprising a central authority, a first card reader operable from the first gaming location and a second card reader operable from the second gaming location, the first and second card readers being operable to read a code from a card entered by a player and wherein the central authority identifies the first gaming location based on the code read at the first location and data entered at the second location and identifies the second gaming location based on the code read at the second location and data entered at the first location.

21. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 18 wherein the code comprises a player ID number.

22. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 18 further comprising an alphanumeric keypad operable from the first gaming location wherein the second message comprises data entered by the keypad.

23. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 18 wherein each of the first communication unit and second communication unit displays an image on one of the first display and second display suitable for entry of at least one of numeric data and alphabetic data by touching one of the first display and second display.

24. (Previously Presented) In a gaming system comprising a service station, a memory and at least a first gaming location enabling play of a game by a first player, a method of enabling communication with the service station and the first gaming location comprising:

storing a preference of the first player in the memory;

generating messages at the first gaming location and displaying messages unrelated to play of the game without interrupting the game, the messages being visible from the first gaming location interactively after the preference is stored in the memory, the messages comprising a first menu of services available for selection by the player, a second menu responsive to selection of one of the services available by the player, the second menu displaying a plurality of second menu items available for selection by the player, displaying a plurality of first menu items and a ~~second~~ third menu responsive to selection of at least one of the first ~~second~~ menu items by the first player, the ~~second~~ third menu displaying a plurality of second ~~third~~ selection items available for selection ordering by the first player from the service station depending on the preference to enable an order of the selected third selection item from the service station;

generating messages at the service station and interactively displaying messages visible from the service station interactively that show the order and an identification of the gaming location requesting the order;

generating a message at the service station recommending an alternative to the player for display at the first gaming location if the order is unavailable; and

transmitting the generated messages.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein a message generated at the service station comprises a reply to a message generated at the first gaming location.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein a message generated at the first gaming location comprises a reply to a message generated at the service station.

27. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24 wherein the preference comprises a preference authorizing the player to be located ~~by another player~~ and wherein generating messages at the service station comprises generating an identification of the location of the player.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27 wherein the identification of the location comprises a map.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein the first gaming location comprises a keypad and wherein said generating messages at the first gaming location comprises entering data from the keypad.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein said generating messages at the first gaming location comprises:

generating an image of at least one of a numeric input and an alphabetic input; and

generating messages at the first gaming location at least in part in response to touching of the image.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein said generating messages at the first service station comprises:

generating an image of one of a numeric input and an alphabetic input; and
generating messages at the first service station at least in part in response to touching of the image.

32. (Cancelled)

33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein the preference comprises a preference authorizing the first player to be located, and wherein the method further comprises:

reading a code corresponding to the first player;
accessing the stored preference in response to the code;
generating an identification of the location of the first player, and displaying the identification.

34. (Cancelled)

35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33 wherein the identification of the location comprises a map.

36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim of claim 24 wherein the first menu displays a plurality of types of personal service available according to the preference of the first player.

37. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein the second menu displays a plurality of reservation services available.

38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein said displaying messages visible from the first gaming location comprises displaying a menu of personal message services available, enabling the first player to enter a name of a person and a message and wherein the transmitting comprises transmitting the message to the named person.

39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein said displaying messages visible from the first gaming location comprises displaying the first and second menus.

40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein the system further comprises a second gaming location enabling play by a second player and wherein the method further comprises:

enabling entry by the first player of at least one of a name of the second player and a second player code from the first gaming location;

enabling entry by the first player of at least one of a name of the second player and a second player code from the first gaming location;

transmitting the first message generated at the first gaming location to the second gaming location;

displaying the first message generated at the first gaming location in a manner visible at the second gaming location;

enabling entry by the second player of at least one of a name of the first player and a first player code from the second gaming location;

enabling entry of a second message from the second gaming location;

transmitting the second message generated at the second gaming location to the first gaming location; and

displaying the second message generated at the second gaming location in a manner visible at the first gaming location.

41. (Currently Amended) In a gaming system comprising a first gaming location arranged to accommodate play by a first player and a second gaming location arranged to accommodate play by a second player, a method of enabling communication between the first and second gaming locations comprising:

generating messages at the first gaming location and displaying messages from the second gaming location at the first gaming location interactively;

enabling entry of at least one of a ~~name of the second player~~ second player gaming location and a second player code from the first gaming location apart from a previously stored list of names of possible recipients;

enabling entry of a first message from the first gaming location;

generating messages at the second gaming location and displaying messages from the first gaming location at the second gaming location interactively;

enabling entry of at least one of a ~~name of the first player~~ first player gaming location and a first player code from the second gaming location apart from a previously stored list of names of possible recipients;

enabling entry of a second message from the second gaming location;

transmitting the messages between the first and second gaming locations resulting in display of a first menu including the first message and the name of the first player at the second gaming location and display of a second menu including the second message and the name of the second player at the second gaming location;

enabling selection of a first reply menu from the first menu;

allowing from the first reply menu the second player to enter a reply message to the first player;

enabling selection of a second reply menu from the second menu; and

allowing from the second reply menu the first player to a reply message to the second player.

42. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 41 wherein a message generated at the second gaming location comprises a reply to a message generated at the first gaming location.

43. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 41 wherein a message generated at the first gaming location comprises a reply to a message generated at the second gaming location.

44. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 41 wherein the first gaming location comprises a touch screen display and wherein said generating messages at the first gaming location comprises touching the display.

45. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 41 wherein the code comprises a player ID number.

46. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 41 wherein the first gaming location comprises a keypad and wherein said generating messages at the first gaming location comprises entering data from the keypad.

47. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 41 wherein said generating messages at the first gaming location comprises:

generating an image of an alphabetic input; and

generating messages at the first gaming location at least in part in response to touching of the image.

48. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 41 wherein said generating messages at the second gaming location comprises:

generating an image of an alphabetic input; and

generating messages at the second gaming location at least in part in response to touching of the image.

49. (Cancelled)

50. (Cancelled)

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61. (Cancelled)

62. (Cancelled)

63. (Cancelled)

64. (New) The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the preference comprises a preference authorizing the player to be located by another player.

65. (New) The method of claim 27 wherein the preference comprises a preference authorizing the player to be located by another player.